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DISTRO CES 2013 DAILY

ISSUE 73.2

DISTRO CES 2013 DAILY 01.09.13

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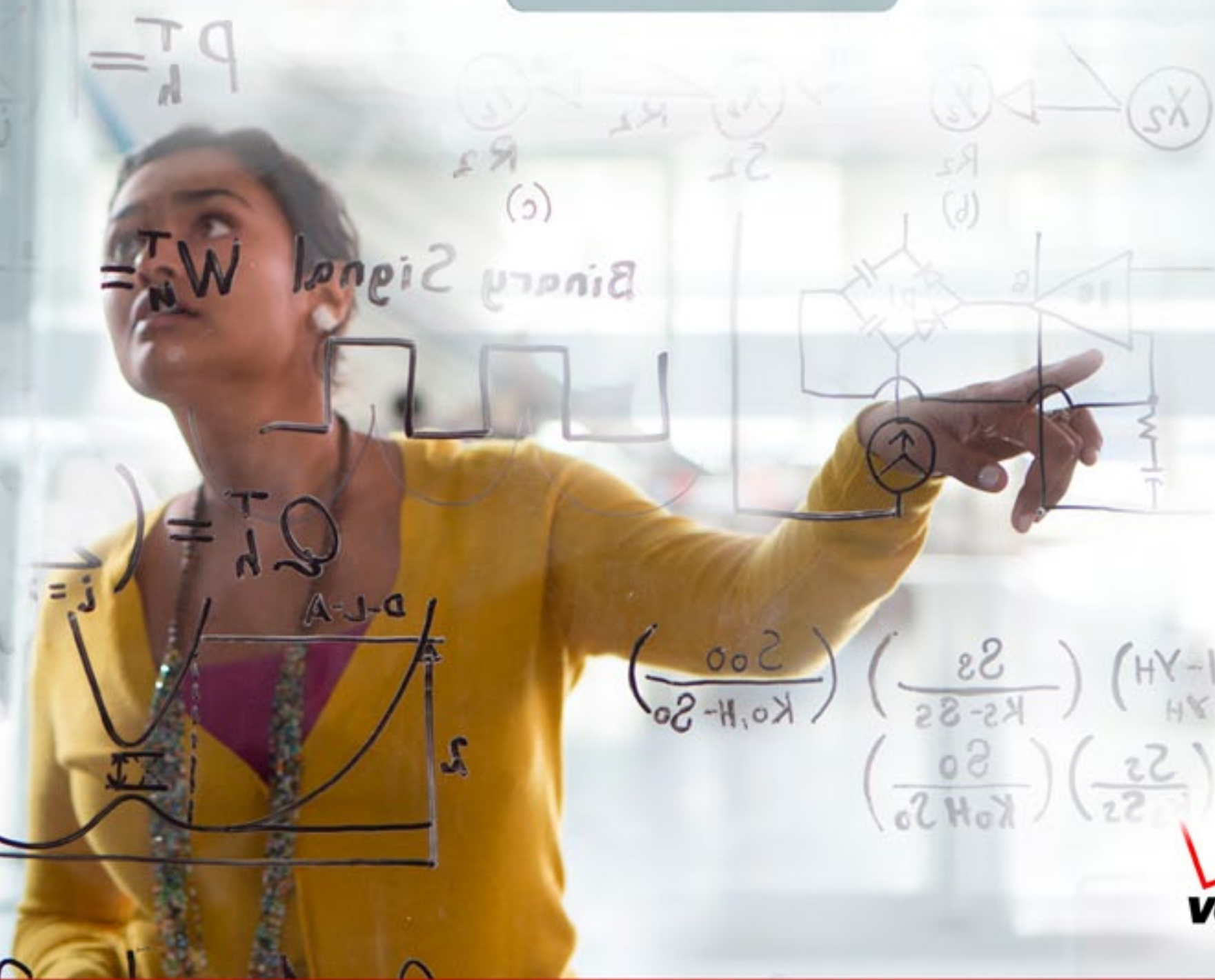
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Las Vegas on a Hisense
110-inch TV



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BIGGEST CHALLENGES
DESERVE EVEN
BIGGER SOLUTIONS

{ POWERFUL ANSWERS }

FIND OUT MORE



01.09.13

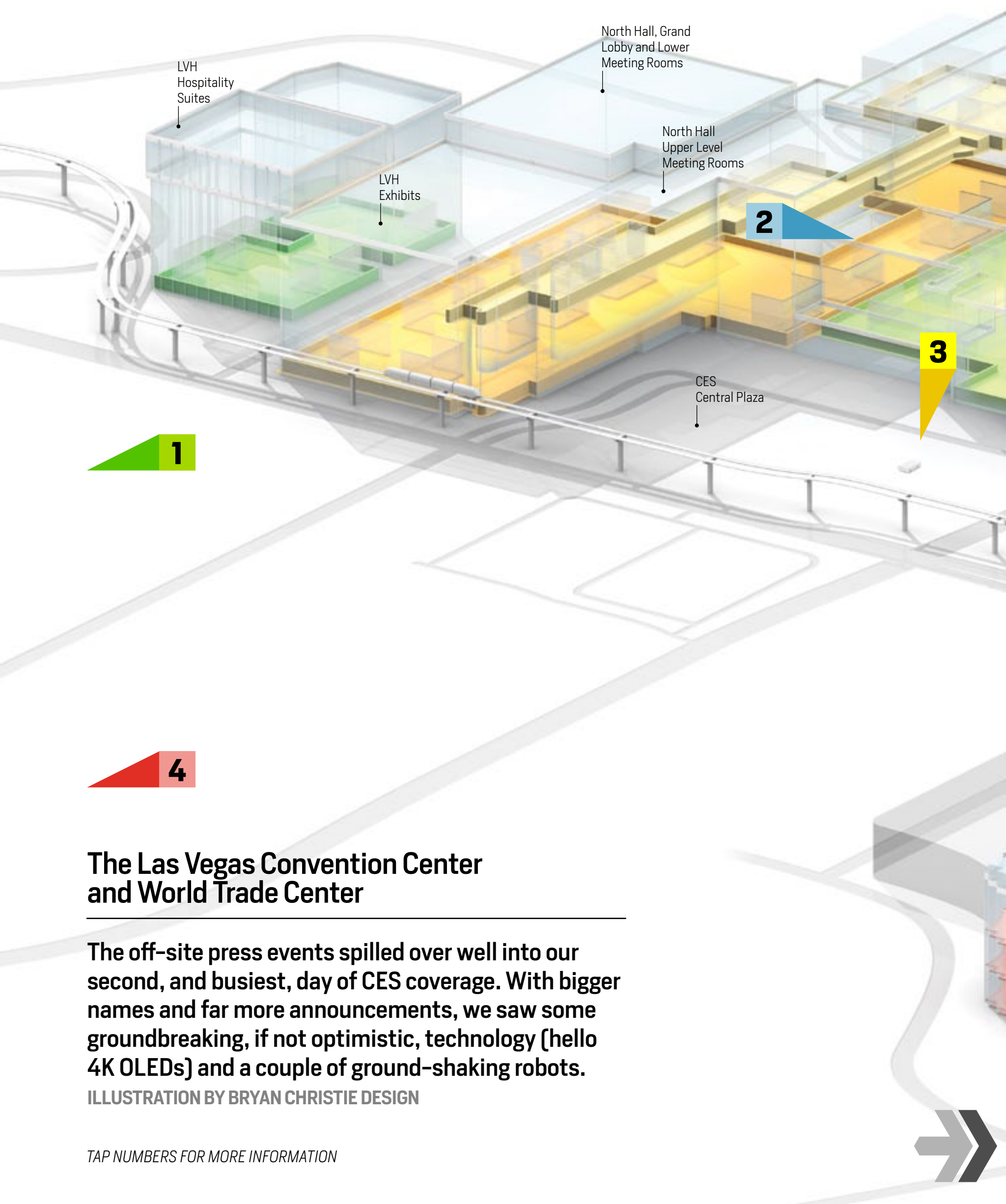


OZAKI'S iPad MACRO

With an iPad this big,
they might as well
have an interactive
Twister app.



01.09.13



The Las Vegas Convention Center and World Trade Center

The off-site press events spilled over well into our second, and busiest, day of CES coverage. With bigger names and far more announcements, we saw some groundbreaking, if not optimistic, technology (hello 4K OLEDs) and a couple of ground-shaking robots.

ILLUSTRATION BY BRYAN CHRISTIE DESIGN

TAP NUMBERS FOR MORE INFORMATION





CES2013

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**ALCATEL ONE
TOUCH SCRIBE HD**

**LG'S 55-INCH
OLED DISPLAY**

**NVIDIA PROJECT
SHIELD**

VIZIO TABLET PC

**HUAWEI ASCEND
MATE**

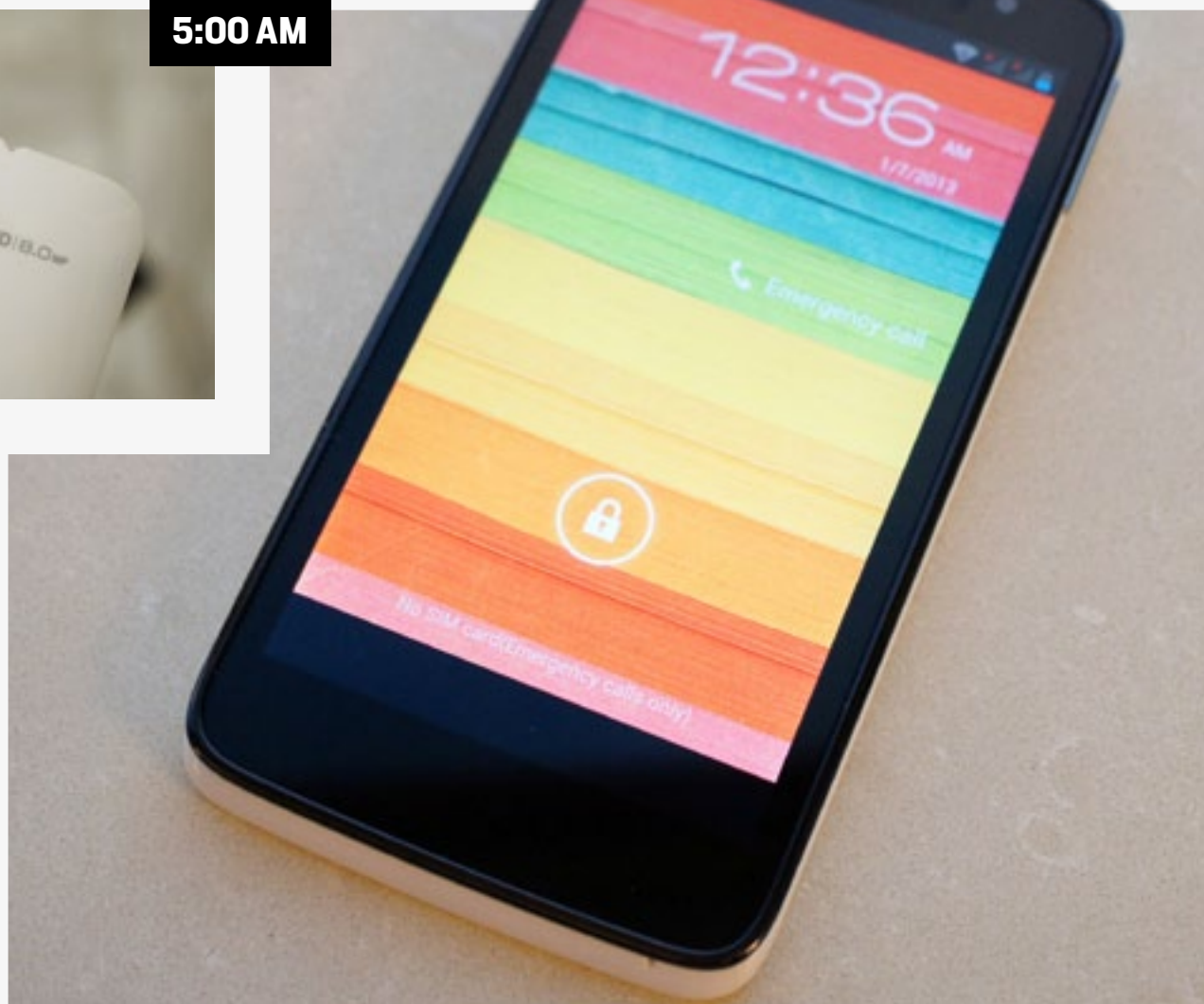
**SAMSUNG'S 85-
INCH S9 UHD TV**

**SONY XPERIA Z
AND ZL**

FITBIT FLEX

We've seen so many 4K displays in the past few days that our CES fever dreams now appear in UHD. Despite the decidedly high-res slant of this year's coverage, it hasn't all been big, bright panels and outsized screens. Along with an explosive and celebrity-rich kickoff keynote from Qualcomm, we've seen a slew of touchable Ultrabooks, at least one promising gaming console and even a few notable smartphone flagships. Herewith, just a few of the biggest devices from day two of our 2013 coverage.



01.07.2013
5:00 AM**PRICE**

Around \$400

AVAILABILITY

Q3 2013 (US)

FIRST**IMPRESSION**

Alcatel takes on the Galaxy Note II with a super-sized, stylus-capable smartphone that caters to the budget buyer.

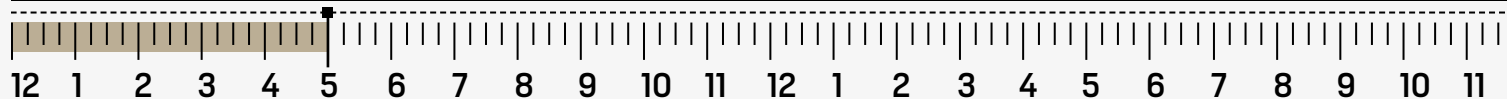
ALCATEL 5-INCH ONE TOUCH SCRIBE HD SMARTPHONE



Alcatel wasn't shy about letting the world know that it had debuted a quad-core 5-inch smartphone here at CES, but now we have a better understanding of the company's lofty ambitions for the One Touch Scribe HD. The Android 4.1.2 handset features a 5-inch HD (1,280 x 720) IPS display, 1GB RAM and offers enhanced functionality with an optional capacitive stylus and specialized apps such as a notebook and movie editor. This is in addition to packing that previously announced 1.2GHz quad-core MT6589 SoC from MediaTek.

With the One Touch Scribe HD, Alcatel is aiming to bring stylus functionality to those unable to afford Samsung's Galaxy Note II. The Scribe HD sports an 8-megapixel rear shooter,





01.07.2013
5:00 AM



a front-facing camera that captures 720p video, 4GB built-in storage, a microSD card slot and a 2,500mAh battery. In terms of connectivity, the handset supports quad-band GSM and offers HSPA+ in three different configurations: 900 / 2100MHz, 850 / 1900 / 2100MHz and 850 / 1700 (AWS) / 2100MHz.

We spent a few minutes with the Scribe HD in Las Vegas and it felt well made. In terms of design the smart-phone is somewhat reminiscent of both HTC's One X (the overall shape and unibody shell) and Samsung's Galaxy Note II (the camera pod and shiny finish). The screen looks decent enough, sort of middle-of-the-pack for an HD IPS display. Performance was a bit more sluggish than during our MediaTek hands-on — then again, the Scribe HD we handled was not running final software. We particularly enjoyed the flip cover, which latches on magnetically like Apple's Smart Cover and provides the same premium experience.

—Myriam Joire



01.07.13
9:06AM

LG'S 55-INCH OLED DISPLAY

PRICE
\$12,000

AVAILABILITY
March 2013

FIRST IMPRESSION
Wandering eyes will easily get sucked into LG's gorgeous 55-inch OLED display.



Talk about distracting. While LG was discussing washing machines and other smart appliances, we couldn't take our eyes off the 55-inch OLED display sitting on the side of the stage. It's one of two new sizes being added to the family, alongside the enormous 84-inch model. The first thing you'll notice, if you've seen its bigger brother is that, all things considered, this is a fairly modest set. Well, relatively, of course. The next thing you'll pick up on is just how sharp the thing is. While playing some slow-motion video of liquid flying through the air throughout the event, it was impossible to take our eyes off the thing.

We managed to get a little closer after the end of the event, and caught a glimpse of some really great viewing angles on the set — though those were hampered a bit by the glossy finish. Outside of a busy CES press event, however, that shouldn't be much of a problem. Also apparent once you approach is just how thin the set is — the bezel, too. — *Brian Heater*



01.07.13
10:48AM**PRICE**
TBD**AVAILABILITY**
Shipping Q2
2013**FIRST
IMPRESSION**
It's an
impressive
package, but the
proof is in the
playing.

NVIDIA PROJECT SHIELD



NVIDIA surprised the world at CES by transitioning from hardware component manufacturer to game console maker with the introduction of Project Shield. A 5-inch “retinal” HD multi-touch display sits atop a full-on game controller that resembles a blend of the Xbox 360 gamepad’s curves and the PlayStation 3 DualShock 3’s unfortunate analog stick placement, all powered by the newly revealed Tegra 4 quad-core Cortex A15 processor. It promises stunning graphics for the Android games it’s made to run, as well as a direct-streaming option employing NVIDIA’s GeForce Experience application. That means not just Android games, but also full-on PC games, with built-in Steam Big Picture Mode integration.



01.07.13
10:48AM

Beyond being a speedy handheld, the 5-inch LED makes high-def PC games look even more visually stunning. Sheer pixel density alone meant that our test run of *Need for Speed: Most Wanted* looked even better on Project Shield than it did on a PC — and with zero perceptible lag. However, Shield is a bit unwieldy. In an effort to make the screen foldable with a full gamepad underneath, the analog sticks are sunk into the body. While it didn't make any of the games we tried unplayable, it did feel a bit less comfy than, say, an Xbox 360 controller. The DualShock 3-esque placement of those analog sticks isn't helping either.

The Shields we used were running

Android 4.2.1 that appeared to be a mostly stock version of the OS. It does include Tegrazone, as well as the Shield app (which facilitates PC game streaming and acts as a hub for games on the device), but it was otherwise pretty standard. We were able to quickly and easily swap from a high-def PC game to the internet browser without any issues, and back again. Switching between PC games is a bit more trouble, requiring you to quit out before swapping to another — a failsafe to make sure you don't accidentally kill your save file. Android gaming is a bit more fluid, operating, well, like an Android device.

While there are still some minor tweaks we'd like to see on Project Shield, the device felt solid, looked great and sounded just as good. The speakers are, if anything, overbearingly loud (that's a good thing), and the screen is far more beautiful than we were expecting. If the price is right, we could see this becoming our go-to gaming handheld at home. — Ben Gilbert



01.07.13
11:54AM**PRICE**

TBD

AVAILABILITY

TBD

**FIRST
IMPRESSION**

Vizio's
AMD-powered
tablet seems
poised to take
on Intel
Atom slates.

VIZIO TABLET PC



Vizio's not exactly a stranger to tablets, but it's just debuting its first Windows 8 slate, the Tablet PC. Like so many other Win 8 tablets, it has an 11.6-inch screen, but the similarities mostly end there. It packs a dual-core, 1GHz AMD Z60 chip, making it one of the few tablets in this class that doesn't run an Atom processor. At the same time, the screen squeezes in 1,920 x 1,080 pixels — an unusual resolution for a lower-powered product. Other known specs: 2GB of RAM, 64GB of flash storage, a 2-megapixel front camera and micro-HDMI / micro-USB ports.

When we first read this tablet's spec sheet, we braced ourselves for a thick, heavy device. While it's neither the thinnest nor the lightest at 0.4 inch thick and 1.66 pounds, it is a lot easier to hold than we thought it would be. We're pretty



01.07.13
11:54AM

sure the build materials have a good deal to do with that. The backside has a rubbery, soft-touch finish that's easy to press your fingers up against and some slight beveling on the front side around the display.

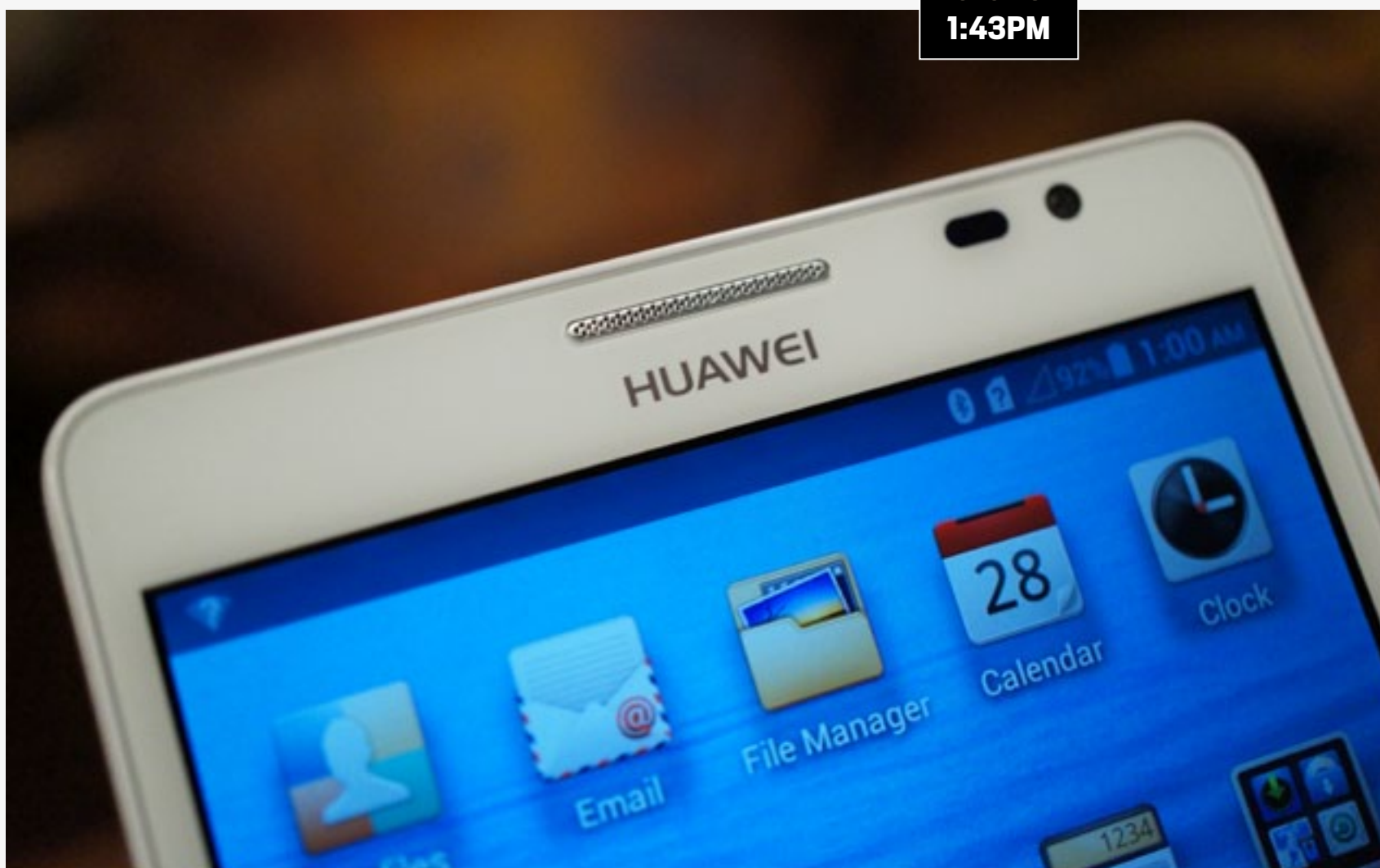
The 1080p resolution looks nice on a relatively small screen, but beyond that, we were impressed by the viewing angles. Vizio says this isn't technically an IPS display, though the panel does make use of some unnamed wide-angle viewing technology. We were able to follow along with *The Lorax* from off to the side and also with the tablet placed face-up. The audio is also promising. We were encouraged to find that the tablet has stereo sound, with two speaker grilles each on the right and left edges. That alone seems like an

act of common sense on Vizio's part: far too many tablet makers stick the speaker openings on the back side.

We only got a brief look at what AMD's Z60 chip can do, but we're cautiously optimistic. Scrolling through web pages in IE 10 felt smooth, and we didn't notice any tiling as we zoomed in and out. It was also quick to launch apps, as well as close out of them.

The one thing that gave us pause was movie playback. While *The Lorax* generally played smoothly, we noticed some isolated bits that seemed ever so slightly slowed-down. We had to wonder if the chip was struggling with that HD content. We're happy to reserve judgment today, but we'll keep those concerns in the back of our minds for now. — Dana Wollman



01.07.13
1:43PM**PRICE**
TBD**AVAILABILITY**
February 2013
(China)**FIRST
IMPRESSION**
Huawei pushes
the boundaries
separating
smartphone and
tablet with this
6.1-inch device.

HUAWEI ASCEND MATE



We've been handling Huawei's new 6.1-inch smart-phone — and there's a lot of screen there. The Ascend Mate feels good; it certainly doesn't feel as middling as other Huawei products we've seen in the past, with a slim profile that remained pretty solid as we browsed the new features. Fingers are crossed that its 4,050mAh battery will prove enough for that imposing 720p display, but at least there's a lot of oomph to start with.

It's a substantial slab you're playing with here, although the curves and the thin profile save it from being too huge for daily use. Those extra software inclusions (for one-handed use — including a dialer and keyboard) worked well enough and the screen really comes into its own when you're watching video or viewing photos — to be expected when that display



01.07.13
1:43PM

borders on tablet territory, more so than even Samsung's Galaxy Note II.

The Ascend Mate's 6.1-inch display is attractive and claims 73 percent of that front surface — something that Huawei was keen to point out. It's a whole lot of screen and due to the length, it didn't feel all that comfortable in our pockets. The interface is lightly touched by Huawei's latest skin and its HiSilicon 1.5GHz quad-core processor was untroubled by the apps and web browsing we managed to fit in during playtime. Like smartphone giant Samsung, it's adding its own software spin to what Android already offers. Apps include a map and augmented reality combo called Guiding Wizard



to get you places as well as high-speed look-up and word translation through smart reading. Unfortunately, we only had a short amount of time to try these.
— Mat Smith



**CES
2013**

DISTRO

HANDS-ON

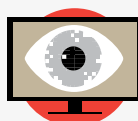


**01.07.13
3:13PM**



SAMSUNG'S 85-INCH S9 UHD TV



01.07.13
3:13PM**PRICE**
TBD**AVAILABILITY**
Sometime in
2013**FIRST
IMPRESSION**
This gallery-
worthy display
raises the bar
for high-end
eye candy, while
besting its
competitors by
an inch.

Right on the heels on Samsung's CES press conference, we got up close and personal with Samsung's just-announced work of art, the 85-inch S9 UHD TV. Its size alone is pretty spectacular, but Sammy clearly wanted to make this one a looker. The company calls the stand a "timeless gallery" frame, and indeed the set would fit right in with some of the more conceptual pieces at the MoMA. Still, that easel-like design could be a bit limiting for some living rooms, so you *can* remove the S9 and wall-mount it — though the 2.2-channel audio is built into that frame. Unique design aside, this TV is all about high-end specs. "Precision Black Pro" display tech is to thank for the high contrast ratio, and colors really do pop — even without Samsung's grand display of fireworks. Powering all 85 inches of high-def visuals is a quad-core processor, which should also help to up-sample 1080p footage to make better use of that Ultra HD (4K) resolution. — *Sarah Silbert*



01.07.2013
5:00 PM**PRICE**
TBD**AVAILABILITY**
Q1 2013**FIRST
IMPRESSION**
Sony's
smartphones
hit their stride
without the
Ericsson
branding.

SONY XPERIA Z AND ZL



Sony welcomed CES guests with two new smartphones — the Xperia Z and the Xperia ZL. Both run Android Jelly Bean, have 5-inch 1080p screens laced with Sony's new Bravia Mobile 2 technology, quad-core 1.5GHz Snapdragon S4 Pro SoCs and new 13-megapixel Exmor RS camera sensors, capable of recording HDR video.

The Xperia Z exudes class — and it's light. With about the same thickness as the iPhone, its design is similar with all straight surfaces, barring some slightly rounded corners. Sony's calling the design language “omni-balance.” The ZL, on the other hand, misses out on the Z's “omni-balance” design (read: hard angles and reflective symmetry). To our minds, though, the Xpe-





ria ZL's chassis may actually be the better of the two, what with its soft-touch contoured back and gently curved edges that make for an incredibly pleasing in-hand fit. Picking up the Z, it feels better and more premium than any phone we've seen from Sony before and, oddly, it's even waterproof. Comparing the Xperia Z against the Xperia ZL, the oblong, broad Xperia Z felt almost too big in our hands; the ZL felt much more at home. While Sony had a phone in each hand to greet us in Vegas, the Xperia Z is where it's focusing most of the attention.

While the Z is waterproof, the ZL is not. The waterproofing has had some effects on the physical design, with all ports (including the headphone socket) now covered with protective flaps. They seemed more solid than the awkward covers on last year's Xperia S although the headphone socket flap could prove to be a frustrating extra step when plug-

ging in. It's also a shame that making the Xperia Z waterproof has also meant bidding farewell to the physical camera button. However, the Xperia ZL does come with those physical controls if needed.

There's also some notable new imaging tech built into both phones: Sony's 13-megapixel Exmor RS sensor. We've followed the development of this new sensor for the last year and it's now ready to make its debut. Alongside improved signal processing, the main boon here is HDR video recording. Naturally, HDR stills are also possible but the feature should offer up improved video capture, namely less washed-out skies and improved low-light video. In short, we're itching to test those skills IRL against the current video-recording king, Nokia's Lumia 920. Sony has also reassessed its camera UI, which now closely resembles its own camera family, at least when it comes to menu options and icons.

Unfortunately, there is one minor flaw with the ZL we couldn't overlook. Despite the 1080p TFT Reality Display employed, there's a noticeable washout that occurs when you tilt the device about 15 degrees in any direction. Thankfully, it only reduces the screen's brilliance by a very slight amount and doesn't worsen as you continue to move the device around. Pricing info for both is non-existent and availability details are vague, but we hope to hear more when MWC rolls around.

— Joseph Volpe and Mat Smith





PRICE
\$100

AVAILABILITY
Spring 2013

FIRST IMPRESSION
A fitness and life-tracking wearable that finally brings Bluetooth to the table for both iOS and Android.

FITBIT FLEX



Fitbit's been in the fitness-tracking game for a while now, but Monday marked its first official entry into the wearable band space. The Flex is a wireless band much in the vein of Nike's FuelBand and Jawbone's rebooted Up. But while it shares many similarities with those existing products, there are a few very notable areas where it breaks apart from the pack — namely, the inclusion of Bluetooth 4.0. Now, health nuts can wirelessly update their stats to an iPhone or a limited selection of Android (!) devices via that standard without having to manually sync.

While it doesn't boast the Yves Behar design that Jawbone fancies, the Flex should prove to be a welcome accessory for fashion-conscious consumers. To that end, it comes in five colors — navy, black, tangerine, slate and teal — and features





a thin strip of LEDs that can be activated by a simple tap. Those lights, five in total, each represent 20 percent towards a user's assigned goal, so current progress can be easily monitored. And, as you might expect, there's a vibration motor within the band to alert users based on settings made from the companion app.

The Flex is indeed a waterproof product and can be worn in the shower or even the swimming pool, though we wouldn't advise you take it diving. Despite this H2O resistance, the Flex won't track your butterfly strokes (or doggie paddles), but it will keep count of your steps, calories burned, sleep and distance walked.

Perhaps one of the most welcome

innovations of this particular wearable is its ability to play friendly with Android — specifically, the Samsung Galaxy Note II and Galaxy S III. Users who purchase this band will be able to download that app from Google Play at the end of January. Further, there's one additional perk for Android users: the ability to tap-to-pair with NFC. In theory, this functionality should provide users with easy access to their stats, but we (in addition to the company's many reps) had significant trouble triggering the action on repeated occasions.

If you've been monitoring the fitness-tracking space, but have been holding out for a band that offers just a little extra, then it's worth considering the Flex. — *Joseph Volpe*



01.09.13

CES PHASE TWO: OLD TWEENS, YOUNG EYES AND THE GOLLING STONES

“We should be waterproofing telephones, they intentionally don’t make them waterproof ‘cause that’s how we damage them.”

**Curtis
“50 Cent”
Jackson**

@Mikelsaac

Hoping that the throngs of farting bloggers will counteract the sneeze barrage I just walked through.

@Veronica

This should be Monster’s new tag line: “Famous people. Because reasons.” #2013CES

@YevP

I think if you get Desmond Tutu in your keynote you win #CES right? That’s the rules?

Nothing says CES like weird tween actors in their 30s, Steve Ballmer, giant robots, vampire murder, and NASCAR.

@LaughingStoic

@jesusdiaz

I wish Samsung could be like Apple and play similar music instead of this crap. You know, the Meatles, Zed Bylan, the Golling Stones ...

“This is for young eyes — because my eyes are getting older ...”

Huawei CEO Richard Yu *on the Ascend D2’s display during the Huawei keynote*

Four-door fridge with Evernote. It’s no longer a dream.

@nicole



CES
2013

DISTRO

01.09.13

TIME MACHINES



CES1972

CES started its quest to the west in the early '70s with a move to Chicago. In its June 17th, 1972 issue, *Billboard* dubbed that year's iteration an "all audio" show, noting that TV makers like RCA and Zenith wouldn't be attending. Along with the move toward a sound-centric lineup, another trend was on the rise: the color orange.



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